

behalf of the 23rd Congressional District of California, I wish him well in his retirement as he enters this new chapter in life.

CONGRATULATING ARKANSAS' NATIVE SON—CRAIG BLAIR—ON HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE FOREST SECTOR

HON. BRUCE WESTERMAN

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 15, 2021

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the successful career and retirement of Arkansas' native son and ordained Minister, Craig Blair. Throughout his almost 40-year career, Mr. Blair has set himself apart as an example to his community and his peers in the forestry sector.

Born in Fort Smith, Arkansas, and the son of an Arkansas school principal and a school librarian, Craig pursued a career in forestry, graduating with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Forest Management from the University of Arkansas at Monticello and a Masters in Forestry Degree in Forest Business from Mississippi State University, where he was also the College of Forest Resources 2018 Alumni Fellow. Over his 39-year career, Craig held a variety of positions in the forestry sector, culminating in his appointment as President and CEO at Resource Management Service (RMS)—a firm that manages timber assets in my district—and in the forest products sector. During his more than 10-year tenure as the firm's leader, Craig oversaw a skilled and experienced team of forestry and investment professionals who built and managed portfolios of forest assets that were collectively valued at more than \$4 billion and that included investments in the United States, Australia, Brazil, China, and New Zealand. Craig became Chairman of the RMS Board of Managers on October 1, 2021.

Among his many accomplishments as President and CEO of RMS, Craig led the firm's efforts to promote diversity and inclusion within the forestry profession, developed the first open ended forest investment fund, and championed collaborative approaches to landscape and species conservation, helping to establish Conservation without Conflict. Craig has also been actively engaged in numerous forestry organizations, serving as Chair on the boards of the National Alliance of Forest Owners, the World Forestry Center, and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative, Inc., where he received the 2017 SFI President's Award.

The husband of Rita Blair for more than 34 years and father of two sons—Braden and Paul—I take this time today to celebrate Craig Blair. I am proud to call him my forestry colleague and my friend. May we always look at his work ethic and his dedication to his family, the forestry sector, and his church as an example to emulate.

IN RECOGNITION OF LIEUTENANT COLONEL ALEXANDER JEFFERSON

HON. RASHIDA TLAIB

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 15, 2021

Ms. TLAIB. Madam Speaker, I rise today in tribute to Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Jefferson, one of the most decorated pilots in Michigan, whose heroic service as a Tuskegee Airman in World War II is being recognized in a rededication ceremony for Jefferson Field, named in his honor in Detroit, Michigan.

Born in Detroit, Michigan on the 15th of November 1921, Lieutenant Colonel Jefferson grew up flying model airplanes in the same field that is now named for him. He graduated from Detroit's Chadsey High School in Detroit and earned a Bachelor of Science Degree from Clark College in Atlanta, Georgia. He did graduate work in Chemistry at Howard University and earned a Master of Science in Education from Wayne State University in Detroit.

Following three months of combat training in Selfridge Field, Michigan, Lieutenant Colonel Jefferson graduated from a pilot training course at the Tuskegee Army Airfield. He served as a P-51 fighter pilot with the Red Tail, 332nd Fighter Group 301st Fighter Squadron in Ramitelli, Italy. Over the course of 18 long range escort missions deep into enemy territory, he bravely provided protection from vicious enemy aircraft. His unit escorted bombers headfirst into the action. They never lost a single plane.

On August 12, 1944, three days before the invasion of Southern France, Lieutenant Colonel Jefferson was shot down while firing at German radar stations on the coast. He was captured by the Germans and kept as a prisoner of war for nine months, ninety miles from Berlin. There, he witnessed firsthand the atrocities committed by the Nazis. He was liberated by the American forces on the 29th of April 1945 and was discharged from active duty in 1947. He retired from the reserves in 1969 with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

After the end of the war, Lieutenant Colonel Jefferson became an elementary school science teacher in Detroit, where he would retire as an assistant principal in 1979. A member of various church, educational, and alumni organizations, as well as one of the founders of the Detroit Chapter of the Tuskegee Airman. He is a member of the Tuskegee Airman Speaker Bureau, a life member of the Silver Falcon Association, and has served as an Admissions Counselor for the U.S. Air Force Academy.

He has received numerous awards and accolades for his bravery and his selfless service for our country, including a Purple Heart Medal, an Air Medal, a POW medal, an Air Force Achievement Medal, and many, many more. On October 14, 1995, Lieutenant Colonel Jefferson was inducted into the Michigan Aviation Hall of Fame.

Please join me in recognition of Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Jefferson on this celebration of his lifelong service to our country.

INTRODUCTION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA BRIDGES HOME RULE ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 15, 2021

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, today, I introduce the District of Columbia Bridges Home Rule Act. This bill would repeal a redundant 1997 federal law that makes it a crime for a person in the District of Columbia to obstruct any bridge connecting D.C. and Virginia. The District already had, and continues to have, its own local law prohibiting obstructing a bridge in the District. There is no federal law that prohibits a person in Virginia from obstructing such a bridge or a person in any state from obstructing a bridge connecting two states, and, fortunately, D.C. does not need a federal law to keep our bridges clear either.

This law is as offensive as it is redundant. It harks back to a time when a private group in D.C. attempted to block the 14th Street Bridge into Virginia, although there is no evidence that D.C. authorities failed to act. The District's local criminal law prohibiting obstructing a bridge takes care of any obstruction occurring here.

Under the 1997 federal law, "whoever in the District of Columbia knowingly and willfully obstructs any bridge connecting the District of Columbia and the Commonwealth of Virginia . . . shall be fined not less than \$1,000 and not more than \$5,000, and in addition may be imprisoned not more than 30 days. . . ." Under D.C. law, a person may be subject to imprisonment and/or fines for "crowd[ing], obstruct[ing], or incommod[ing] . . . [t]he use of any street, avenue, alley, road, highway, or sidewalk."

The courts have long held that D.C. may repeal federal laws that predate the Home Rule Act of 1973 (HRA) and apply exclusively in or to the District, but have not ruled on whether D.C. may repeal post-HRA federal laws that apply exclusively in or to the District. My bill would avoid any court challenge the District could face if it tries to repeal this 1997 federal law.

This bill is an important step in increasing home rule for the District, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

HOMETOWN HERO—JAMES VITTON

HON. BETH VAN DUYNE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 15, 2021

Ms. VAN DUYNE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize James Vitton of Dallas, TX who served in the U.S. Navy and completed over 4,600 military flight hours.

Over the weekend, I had the honor of awarding James the 2021 Congressional Veteran Commendation. Captain Vitton was commissioned in 1984, and was designated a Naval Aviator in 1986.

James courageously flew 341 combat hours during the Iran/Iraq War and served as the Flight Engineer Division Officer, Aircraft Division and Assistant Operations Officer.

Among many of his positions during his Operational Level of Warfare tenure, Vitton